

WOT STUFF

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Front Cover

Ken Barr

Space Station Dora

story - Jan Strnad
art - Bob Kline

The Vanguard

story and art - Alex Toth

House on Whore Hill

story and art - Mike Vosburg

Illustration

Herb Arnold

Scarecrow

story and art - Bil and Nish Maher

Orion - chapter III

story and art - Gray Morrow

Mercy

story - Bob Keenan
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Kenshi Blade!

story and art - Dr. William Stillwell

Back Cover

Bob Kline

Assistant Editor

Bob Keenan

ERN COLÓN

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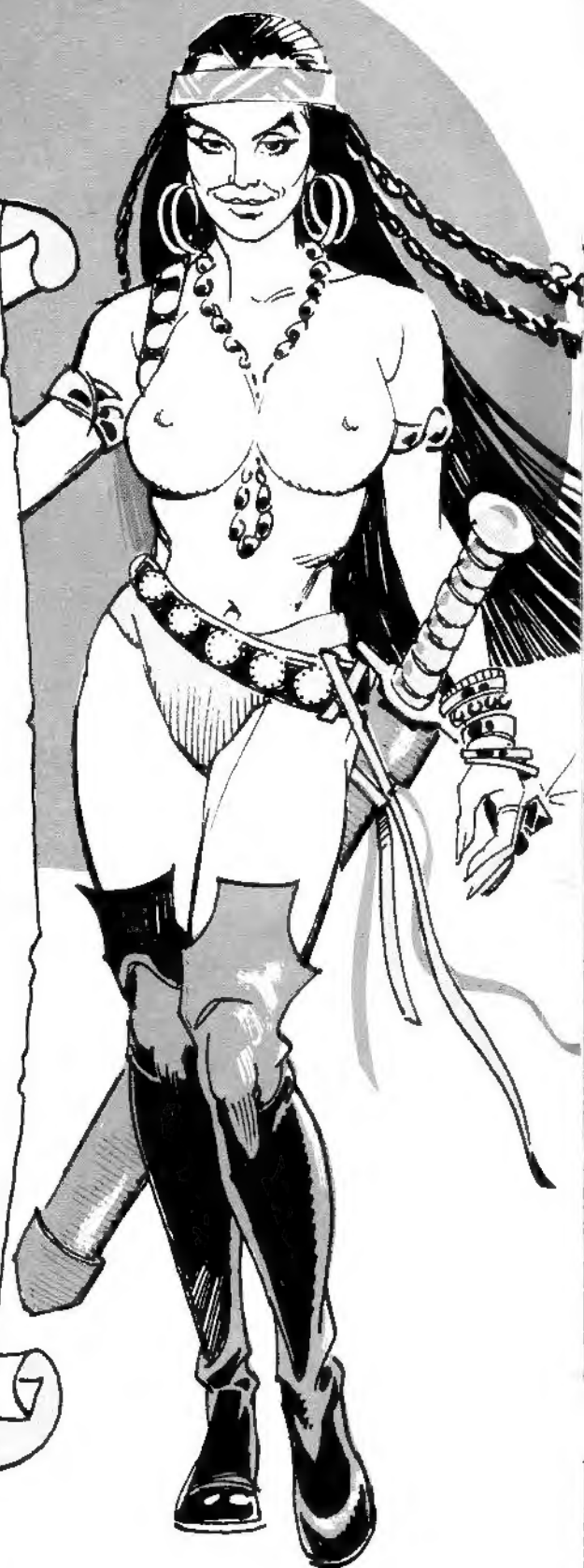
770 East 45th Street


Brooklyn, New York 11203

SGT MARK E. RAINEY

H&S CO., H&S BN, 1ST FSSB

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WE HAVE STATION
DORA LOCKED IN NOW,
SIR. POWER IN USE IS
MINIMAL—SHE APPEARS
TO BE DRIFTING.

ANY
COMMUNICATION
YET?


NO SIR.
NOTHING
AT ALL.

SPACE STATION DORA

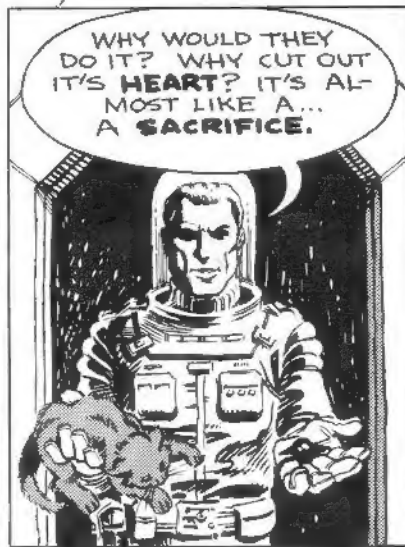
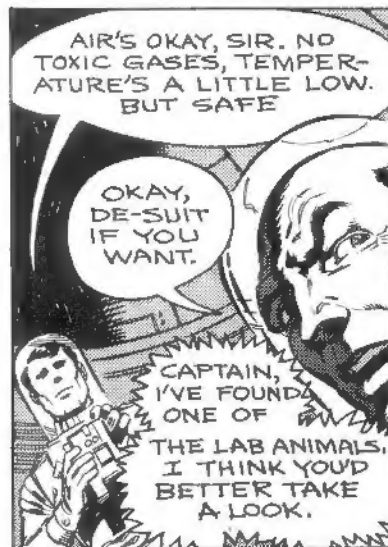
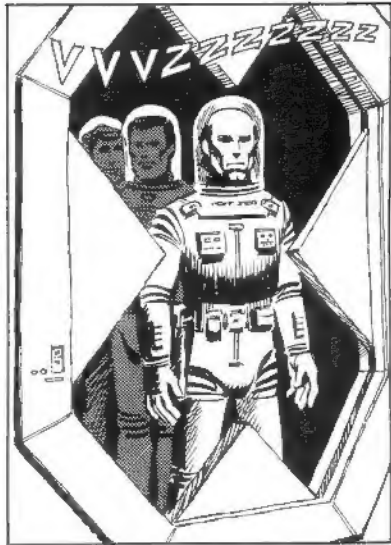
J. S. STRNAD & BOB KLINE

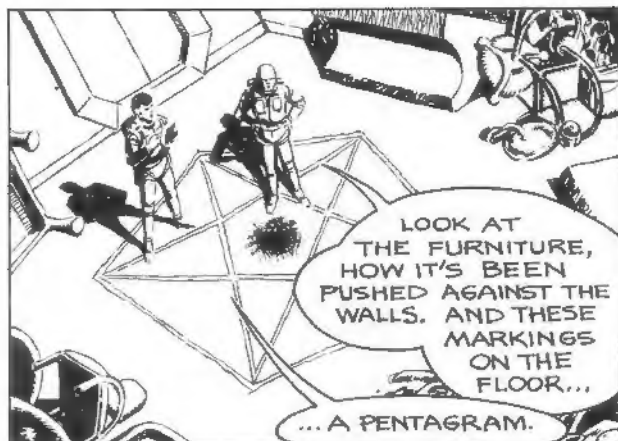


THEY'VE BEEN
SILENT FOR TWO
WEEKS. SOMETHING'S
WRONG FOR SURE.



PULL IN
CLOSE. WE'RE
GOING ABOARD.





LOOK AT THE FURNITURE, HOW IT'S BEEN PUSHED AGAINST THE WALLS. AND THESE MARKINGS ON THE FLOOR...

...A PENTAGRAM.



AND IN THE MIDDLE OF IT... THIS.



WHAT IS IT?

SOOT. THEY WERE BURNING SOMETHING --SOMETHING WITH SULPHUR IN IT.

SO WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT? WHAT WERE THEY DOING?



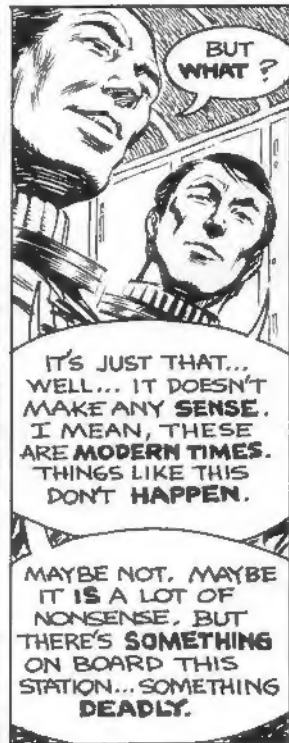
BLACK MASS. WITCHCRAFT. CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL ... THEY WERE PLAYING WITH IT.

I THINK WE'D BETTER CHECK OUT THE CHAPEL



WHATEVER KILLED THE CREW OF STATION DORA MIGHT STILL BE ON BOARD. KEEP YOUR PISTOL OUT. THOUGH I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH GOOD IT'LL DO...

YES SIR, BUT...



BUT WHAT?

IT'S JUST THAT... WELL... IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE. I MEAN, THESE ARE MODERN TIMES. THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T HAPPEN.

MAYBE NOT. MAYBE IT IS A LOT OF NONSENSE, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ON BOARD THIS STATION... SOMETHING DEADLY.

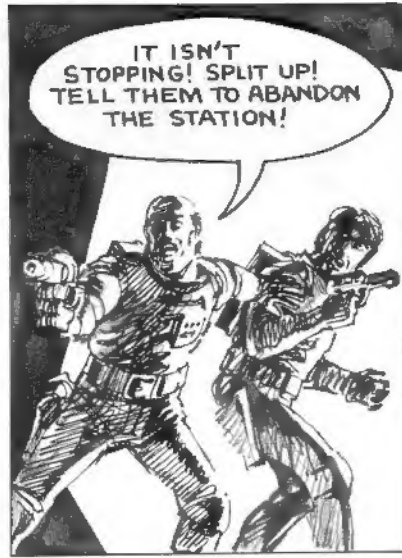


AARGH!

NAGLY!



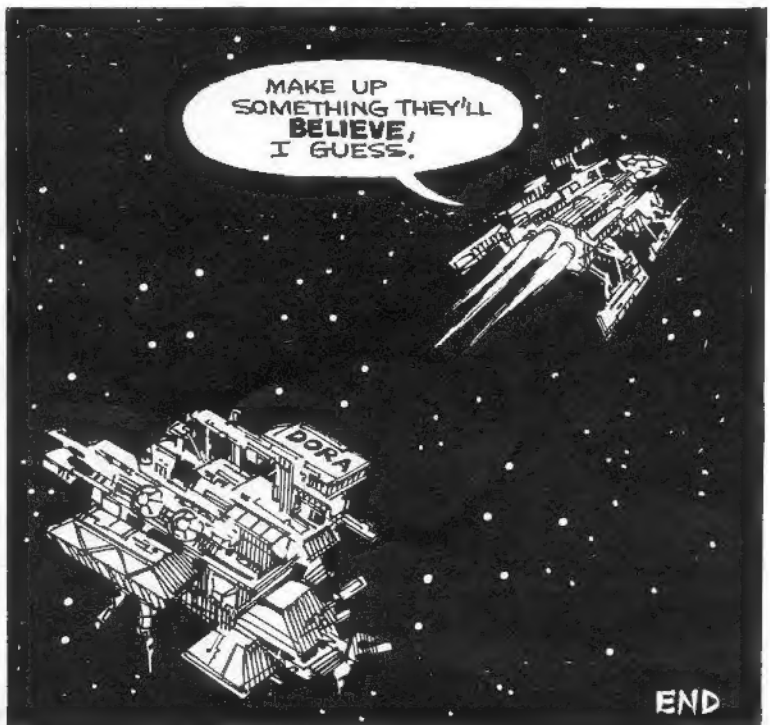
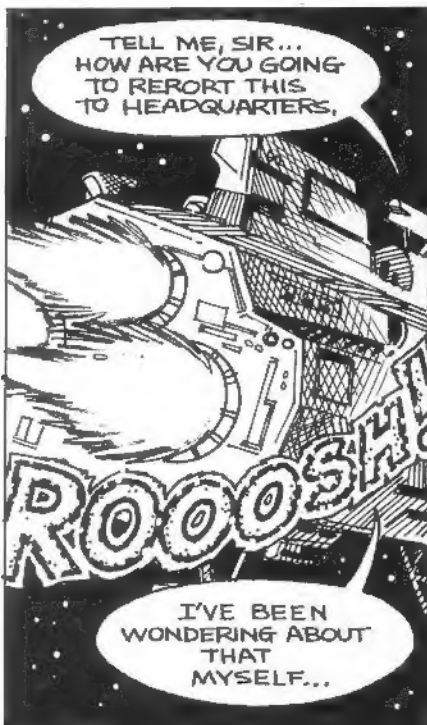
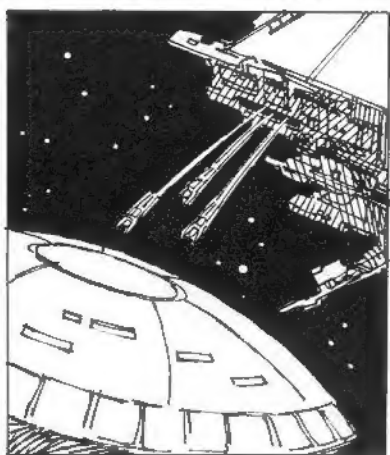
GOD... FIRE!











THIS ONE BEGAN
LATE ONE NIGHT IN
NOVEMBER, 1936
...A TIME FOR NEW
TH'N'KING, CHANGE,
EXPERIMENTATION
AND PROGRESS...

IT SEEMED **THE
VANGUARD** WAS
DUE FOR SOME OF
THE SAME... SO, I
HAD DEVISED NEW
GARB FOR HIM!
ONE THAT WOULD
ALLOW QUICKER
CHANGES N'AND
OUT OF ANONYMITY,
IN DEGREES - AND
AS OCCASION
WOULD PERMIT...

...FROM 'BASIC' MASK... OR 'INTERMEDIATE'... TO... FULL COSTUME!...

HHMMMM

MARK FORTÉ
ALIAS...

THE

VANGUARD

RUBY BISHOP,
FIANCEE, AIDE
DE CAMP...
THANK
YOU!

"I APPROVE!"

STORY
AND ART by
ALEX
TOTH

©1977
ALEX
TOTH
5

JUST
THEN

**PING
PING**



HELLO? YES -
SPEAKING!

MARK?!
THANK GOD
I FOUND
YOU -

THIS IS EDEN EDEN
GILES OF LONDON!
YES! MARK, O' MAN,
I'M IN A TERRIBLE
FIX DOWN HERE IN
MIAMI - AND
YOU'RE M'LAST
HOPE -

WHAT IS
IT EDEN?
WHAT'S
WRONG
?/?

I - I CAN'T - NOW - NOT OVER
THE PHONE! SORRY! I'LL
TELL YOU IF AND WHEN YOU
FLY DOWN! CAN YOU ?!

EDEN
GILES?
MIAMI?

SHHH

EDEN? MEET
TOMORROW'S
4 00 PM PLANE!
I'LL BE ON IT -

WE'LL
BE ON
IT -!

①

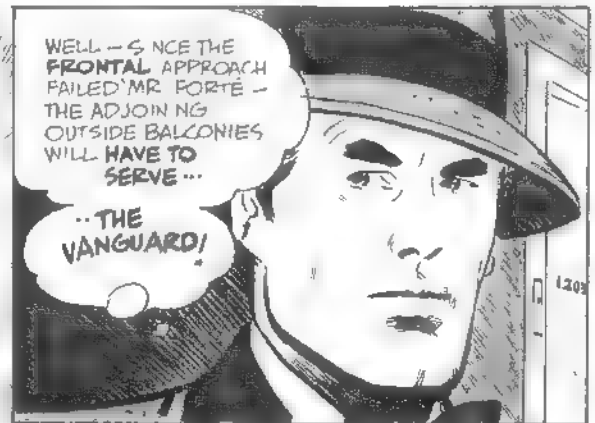
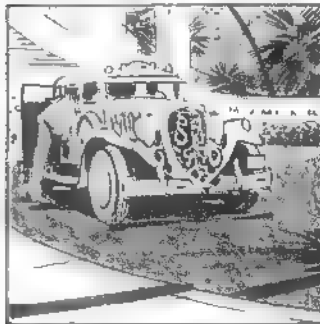


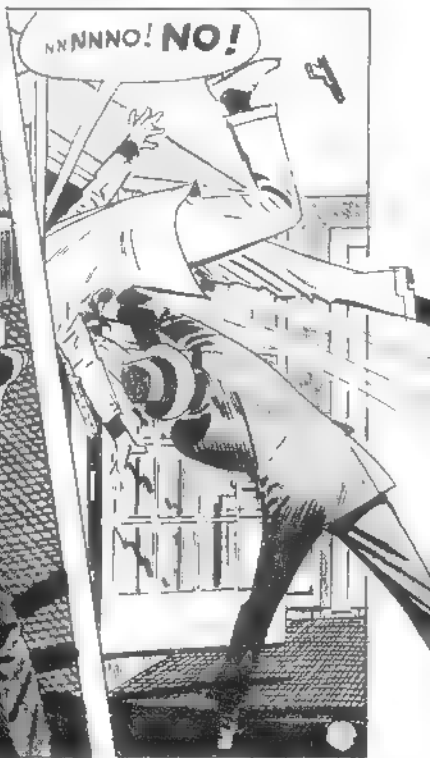
'WE' LEFT AN HOUR BEFORE
WE GAVE UP AND LED A TAXI,
AND HEADED FOR THE HOTEL
EDEN'S JAWY STAYED IN.

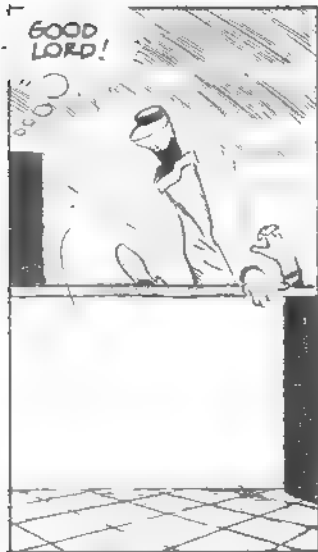


SURE ENOUGH, HE WAS
REGISTERED IN SUITE
1201! THE CLERK RANG
EDEN'S ROOMS. BUT—

THEY WERE! AND I DID!
RUBY SETTLED US IN AND
I PAID A VISIT NEXT DOOR







GOOD LORD!

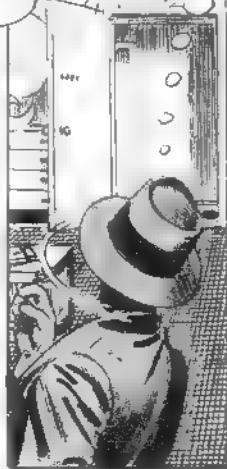
A I I E E E E E E E E

—THAT WASN'T IN THE SCRIPT! SORRY—

NOW FOR THE OTHER TWO —

WHA-?!

THEY'RE GONE!!



FIRE STAIR 8

OH NO!

HOTEL POLICE ?!

THIS IS THE VANGUARD! TWO STICKUP MEN ARE ESCAPING DOWN FIRE STAIRWELL 8! YES — NOW! —

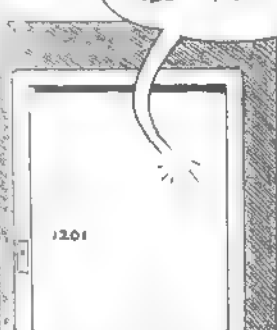
— A THIRD TOOK THE QUICK WAY DOWN! YOU'LL FIND HIM IN THE FORECOURT GARDEN!

MUST TEND TO EDEN —

— AND 'EXIT' THE VANGUARD, FOR AWHILE! —

OOHHNNNN — MY HEAD!

JUST IN TIME, TOO!



1201



HERE SIT DOWN EDEN!

WHA-? OH, MARK! THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE! A ARE 'THEY' GONE?!

WE'RE ALONE EDEN!

UH-OH! SPOKE TOO SOON!

TH-THEY'VE COME BACK!

SIT TIGHT! I'LL GET IT!

MARK! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?! I-I HEARD SHOTS!!

COME IN, RUBY! I'M OK!



RUBY TENDED EDEN'S HEAD-WOUND — AND THEN I GOT US DOWN TO THE REASON WE WERE HERE —



ALL RIGHT, EDEN! FROM THE TOP — WHAT'S GOING ON — ?

"MY WIFE, CELIA, JOINED ME ON TH S BUSINESS TRIP, WHICH INVOLVES A TRANSFER OF \$100,000.00 IN BLUE CHIP STOCK SECURITIES TO A MIAMI HOLDING COMPANY — DUE TO TAKE PLACE AT 2:00 PM TOMORROW! BUT — OUR FIRST NIGHT IN TOWN, HOTEL GUESTS HERE, INVITED US TO JOIN THEM FOR AN EVENING OF CASINO ON A GAMBLING SHIP ANCHORED OFFSHORE — JUST OUTSIDE THE LEGAL 3 MILE LIMIT ..."

"ONE OF THEIR TWO MOTOR LAUNCHES DISPATCHED US TO THE 'REX' IN QUICK ORDER, WHERE WE JOINED THE GAMING..."



"— AT FIRST, I WON QUITE A LOT — BUT, AFTER A FEW HOURS, MY BETS AND MY LOSSES BEGAN TO MOUNT! CELIA TRIED TO STOP ME, BUT I ASKED FOR CREDIT — AND IN ANWHILE EVEN MORE — MY LOSSES SOON ROSE TO... \$75,000.00!..."



"IT WAS THEN THAT I WAS SENT FOR BY THE OWNER OF THE 'REX' — AND A 'DEAL' WAS STRUCK — TO ALLOW ME TO RECOVER..."



"I—I SIGNED A VOUCHER, PUTTING UP MY FIRM'S \$100,000.00 SECURITIES PORTFOLIO AS COLLATERAL AGAINST MY LOSSES, PLUS ANOTHER \$25,000.00 IN CREDIT — SO THAT I MIGHT 'BREAK EVEN' AS AMERICANS WOULD PUT IT — BUT I LOST THAT, TOO! MY DEBT TOTAL: \$50,000.00!"



EDEN, YOU BLOODY FOOL! HOW COULD YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE 'HAD' LIKE THAT? SHE'S LIKE THE 'REX', ARE MOB-OWNED, AND NO ONE COMES AWAY A WINNER FROM THE R FIKED GAMES! WHO IS THE 'OWNER' OF THE 'REX'? AND WHERE IS CELIA?



THE MAN I DEALT WITH WAS MR. B.B. STONE —



STONE? SO THAT'S WHERE THAT KILLER GOT TO —

KILLER?!



STONE'S BEEN IN MORE RACKETS, USED MORE ALIASES, IS ON MORE 'WANTED' POSTERS THAN — WHAT IS IT, EDEN?



A KILLER —!? OH, LORD, NO!

TELL ME!

CELIA! SHE —



— SHE'S STILL ON THE 'REX'! STONE'S HOLDING HER, AS WELL AS THE SECURITIES, UNTIL I REPAY HIS \$50,000.00! THE 48 HOURS HE GAVE ME ARE USED UP! HIS MEN WERE HERE, TO 'COLLECT', BEFORE YOU ARRIVED — ALL I HAD WAS THE \$5,000.00 I GOT FROM SELLING OFF OUR PERSONAL JEWELRY! I BEGGED FOR MORE TIME! BUT THEY MOCKED ME...



— THREATENED TO HARM CELIA! I CAN'T APPEAL TO THE POLICE! LEGALLY, IT'S OUT OF THEIR HANDS! TOO, I'M AFRAID TO DO SO FOR FEAR OF JEOPARDIZING CELIA'S SAFETY EVEN MORE! YOU ARE MY ONLY HOPE, MARK! WHAT CAN I DO NOW —?

— AND CELIA — HOW MUCH TIME DOES SHE HAVE LEFT — OUT THERE —?





JUST ENOUGH, EDEN, I PROMISE YOU--!

YOU TWO RING ROOM SERVICE FOR DINNER AND STAY PUT HERE, WHILE I DRESS AND RUN--

RUN WHERE, MARK?



TO THE 'REX', TO PLAY LONG ODDS -- 'ONE AGAINST THE HOUSE'-- THAT I CAN BEAT THE SYSTEM!

AFTER MAKING A FEW PHONE CALLS, I LEFT THE HOTEL--

YES, SIR! THEM'S THE GAMBLING CROWD ALL WAITIN' FAW

THANKS, CABBIE! NO APOLOGY'S NECESSARY! WE AGREE... G'DNIGHT!



THE WATER TAXIS, ALREADY! JUS' MORE SHEEP READY FAW THE SHEARIN', I'D SAY -- BEGGIN' Y' PAIDON, SIR! AN' GOOD LUCK!



THIS TROJAN HORSE' GAMBLE HAD BETTER PAY OFF, OL' SON -- ONE LIFE AND ONE CAREER ARE 'ON THE LINE'-- TO COIN A PHRASE!



SOON --

CHOPPY SEAS TONIGHT! A STORM WOULD SEND THESE JOLLY REVELERS BACK TO SHORE -- FAST! HMMM, TWO DECKS ABOVE AND TWO BELOW FOR ME TO SEARCH-- AND LOTS OF 'GUNS' TO GET PAST, TO FIND CELIA, EDEN'S BONDS, AND HIS SIGNED VOUCHER -- AND A WAY BACK TO SHORE!



NAME YOUR 'POISON', FRIEND--

FIFTY, IN FIVE DOLLAR CHIPS! 'BREAKIN' A HUNDRED!

YOU GOT IT--



HEY! THESE BILLS ARE ALL PHONY! SO, STONE'S RUNNING 'BAD PAPER' ON THESE VISITING 'SUCKERS', TOO, EH--? FIGURES' BUT --



THAT GAVE ME AN IDEA FOR A WAY TO CREATE A DIVERSION TO GET THAT CROWD OFF THE SHIP AND AWAY FROM POSSIBLE DANGER --

WHY, YOU'RE RIGHT! THIS IS BOGUS MONEY! THE DIRTY RATS!

THEY PAY OUT THIS COUNTERFEIT MONEY TO US SO THAT EVEN IF WE 'WIN', WE LOSE! PASS THE WORD AROUND TO THE OTHERS!

I WILL!

YOU BET!

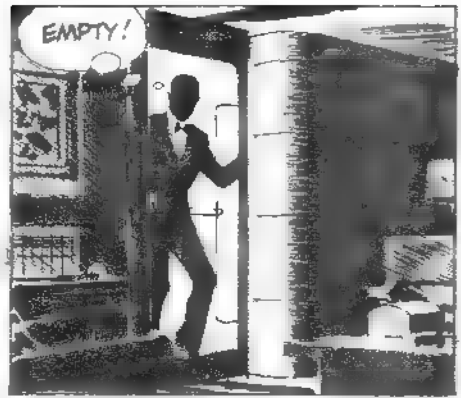


WHILE THAT'S GOING ON, I'LL EXPLORE A BIT! THIS MIGHT LEAD ME TO --

AHHH - BINGO! STONE'S OFFICE!



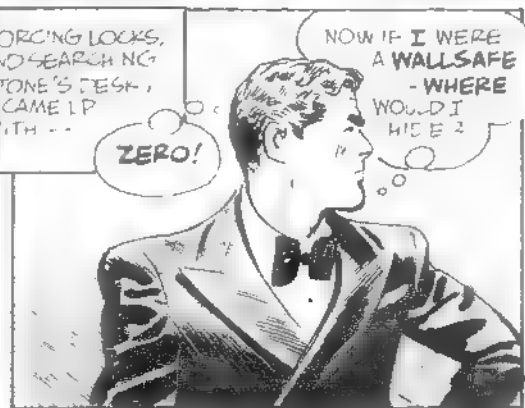
PRIVATE



EMPTY!

FORCING LOCKS, AND SEARCHING STONE'S DESK, I CAME UP WITH --

ZERO!

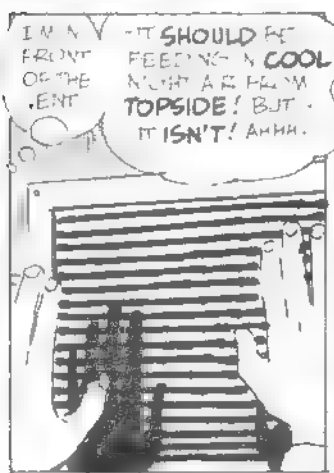


NOW IF I WERE A WALLSAFE - WHERE WOULD I HIDE?

REHND A BOX WHEM AT LULUE, OK A SA... WALL PANEL? I T... T... T... WITH NO... K I FELT QUITE.

WARM

WHY?

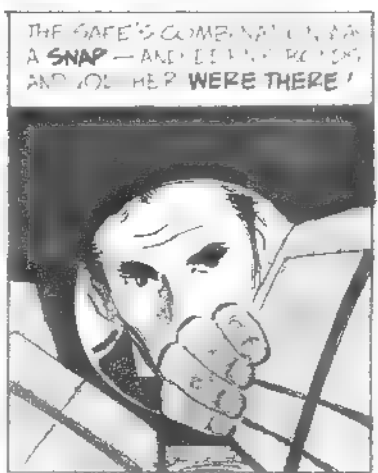


I'M IN FRONT OF THE ENT

IT SHOULD BE FEEDING A COOL NIGHT AIR FROM TOPSIDE! BUT IT ISN'T! AHHH.



THERE IT IS! PRETTY SLICK, STONE!



THE SAFE'S COMBINATION IS A SNAP - AND I'VE FOUND OUT WHERE THEY WERE THERE!



I'VE HAD THE LOCK AND... TO GET THEM I HEARD --

-- APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS AND THE LOUD VOICES OF TWO MEN! ONE WAS

B.B.!!

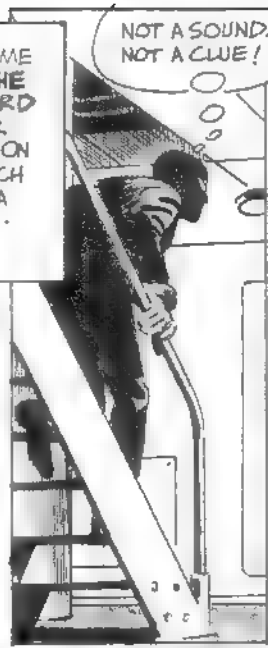
BOSS! WHERE YA BEEN? WE GOT TROUBLE! THE 'SUCKERS' - Y'GOTTA TALK TO 'EM! THEY'RE LIKE A PACK O' WOLVES! THEY GOT WISE TO OUR BAD PAPER! AN' WANT THEIR DROUGH BACK - AN BOTH OUR BOATS OUT HERE! TAKE 'EM! SHORE - FAST!



WHAT? I'LL FIX 'EM! LET'S GO!!



IT WAS TIME
— FOR THE
VANGUARD
TO APPEAR,
AND TAKE ON
THE SEARCH
FOR CELIA
GILES! ...



NOT A SOUND!
NOT A CLUE!



MINUTE BY MINUTE,
CABIN BY CABIN, THE
ODDS GREW THAT
MUCH SHORTER
THAT THE NEXT TURN
IN THE CORRIDOR
WOULD BE MY.

JACKPOT!

A 'GUARD!



OPEN UP,
PATSY! IT'S
'DINING HOUR'
FOR D' LADY
FAIR AGIN!
HAAAA -

GO WANN!
BEAT IT, YA
SAP! I'LL
GIVE IT TO
HER --!

THE VANGUARD STRUCK!



HERE
Y'ARE,
TOOTS!
LOOKS
OKAY,
HUH?
WELL,
SO DO
YOU!
TO ME!
COME
'ERE!

SLAP!

NO!
STOP!!
-WFFF!



IT'S ALL
RIGHT,
MRS.
GILES!

WHO -?!
WHAT -?!!



HERE'S 'ONE'
FOR THE LADY,
AND -

KAROW!



'ONE'
SEEMS
TO BE
ALL HE
CAN
TAKE!

I'M TAKING
YOU OUT OF
HERE, AND
UPSTAIRS, TO
SLIP YOU INTO
THE CROWDS
GOING BACK
TO SHORE!
READY?



YES -

IS EDEN
ALL RIGHT?
A-AND -

WHO
ARE
YOU?



HE'S FINE! I'M ACTING
FOR HIM, THROUGH MARK
FORTÉ, WHO'LL JOIN
YOU LATER, TOPSIDE!
NOW - WE MUST
HURRY!

MEANWHILE, THE CASINO DECK WAS - CHAOS!! B.B. STONE AND HIS MEN COULDN'T 'CON THE CROWD OF ANGRY 'LOSERS' TO STAY! THEY WERE LEAVING AS FAST AS THE LAUNCHES COULD TAKE THEM!

NO! WE'RE LEAVING, YOU RATS!

GET YOUR WATER TAXIS TO STEP ON IT -

WE KNOW THE POLICE CAN'T NAB YOU OUT HERE - BEYOND THE THREE MILE LIMIT, BUT -

NO ONE 'LL COME OUT HERE, EVER, ONCE WE TELL 'EM THE TRUTH!

YEAH! - MIGHT AS WELL SET SAIL FOR CHINA, BOYS! YOU AND YOUR RACKETS ARE ALL WASHED UP!

YEAH! COUNTERFEITING WILL LOCK YOU UP!

WAIT A MINUTE

LISTEN!

NO!

HURRY 'EM UP!



ALL RIGHT NOW - JUST AROUND THE NEXT TURN AND -

HEY!

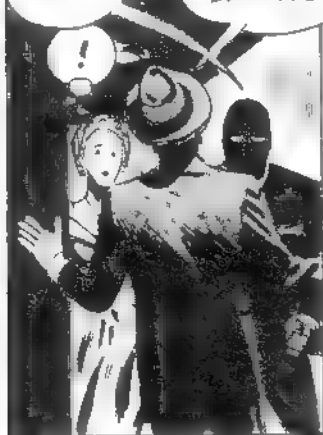
WHO ARE YOU TWO? WHAT'RE YOU UP TO BACK HERE?

AIN'T YOU DA' GILES DAME?

AN' YOU! TAKE OFF DAT MASK! WHA-!?

HEY! YOU'RE THE VAN-O-OFF!

ZAP KRAK



I STOWED HIM IN A PAINT LOCKER, AND WE WENT ON!

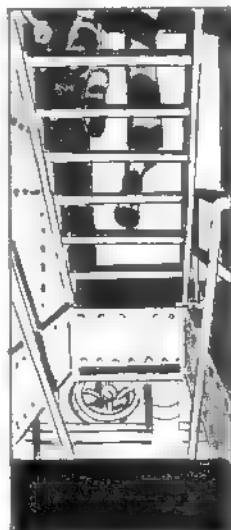
WE PART HERE! THIS DOOR OPENS TO OUTSIDE DECK! WORK YOUR WAY INTO THE CROWD, AND UP FRONT, SO THAT YOU'LL LEAVE ON THE NEXT LAUNCH! FACE THE SEA, KEEP YOUR BACK TO STONE'S MEN SO YOU WON'T BE SPOTTED AND CAPTURED AGAIN! KEEP CALM AND GOOD LUCK!

BLESS YOU!



SHE'LL BE FINE!

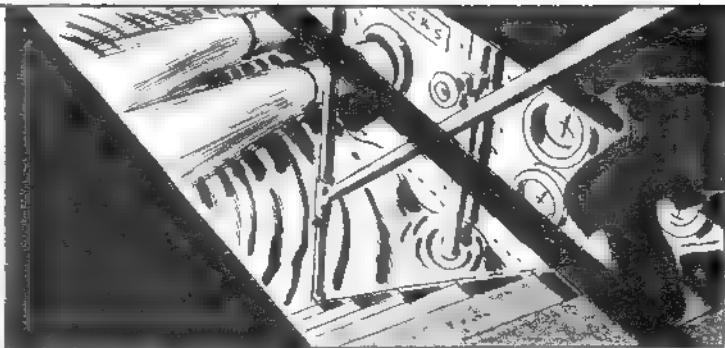
BEFORE I COULD LEAVE THE SHIP, AS MARK FORTÉ, THE VANGUARD HAD ONE MORE JOB TO DO, IN THE HOLD! A RISKY, BUT VITAL ONE!



THERE!
TURNED
ON FULL
'OPEN'!

AND IS
LOCKED -
SO IT CAN'T
BE TURNED
OFF, I'LL
TAKE THE
KEY WITH
ME!

MY 'JOB' WAS
DONE! I HAD
OPENED THE
SEACOCKS!
TO FLOOD,
AND SOON
SINK, THIS
IGNOBLE
SHIP, 'REX'!



AS I MADE MY
WAY TOPSIDE,
I PUT AWAY THE
VANGUARD'S
GLOVES AND
HOOD - JUST
AS I PASSED
THROUGH THE
SAME DECK
AREA WHERE
CELIA 'D BEEN
HELD CAPTIVE!
A SURPRISE -

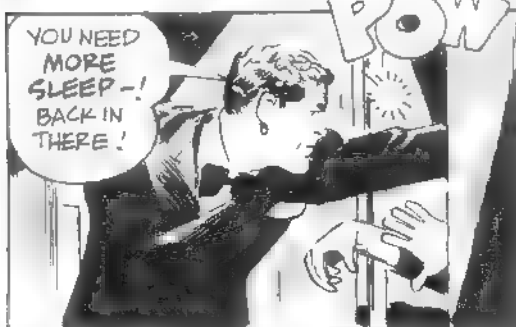
UH-OH!
CELIA'S
GUARD!
AWAKE-



HEY -
MAC! TELL
D' BOSS DA
GILES GAL
IS GONE -
WILL YA?!
I - I'M
DIZZY -

YOU NEED
MORE
SLEEP -!
BACK IN
THERE!

POW



NIGHT-
NIGHT,
PATSY!



CELIA WAS ASHORE AND WITH EDEN AND RUBY AT THE HOTEL BY THE TIME I JOINED THE LAST BOATLOAD OF DEBARKING STRAGGLERS! AS WE GOT UNDERWAY, I TOOK MY LAST LOOK AT THE 'REX', AND SAW HER ROLL TO A 20° DEGREE LIST! ALL OF WHICH INSPIRED STONE'S GANG AND CREW TO PERFORM A CLASSIC 'ABANDON SHIP' LIFEBOAT DRILL - TWO BOATS HIT THE WATER -

THERE'S
ONLY ONE
PLACE THEY
CAN ROW TO - INTO
THE 3 MILE LIMIT -
TO SHORE!



-AND AS THEY DID,
THEY SURRENDERED
TO A WAITING U.S.
COAST GUARD CUTTER
AND THE F.B.I AND
TREASURY AGENTS
I'D PHONED FOR-

LATER, THE FOUR OF US RELAXED -

WELL, EDEN!
CELIA, YOU,
YOUR BONDS
AND CAREER
ARE SAFE
AGAIN -!

NO MORE
GAMBLING
FOR ME!
THANKS
TO YOU,
MARK!

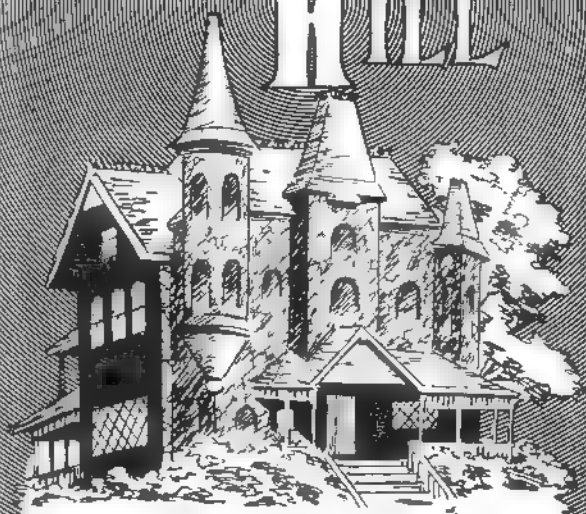
-AND THE
VANGUARD!

NEVER
HEARD
OF HIM!



END

House Where on Horror Hill



THIS IS THE BEARDSLEY MANSION, MR. JONES. THE HOUSE HAS BEEN EMPTY SINCE THE LAST OF THE FAMILY DIED YEARS AGO., BUT I THINK YOU'LL FIND THE PLACE WELL KEPT—ALTHOUGH A BIT DUSTY..

~ Chuckle ~ A
HAUNTED HOUSE
NO DOUBT..



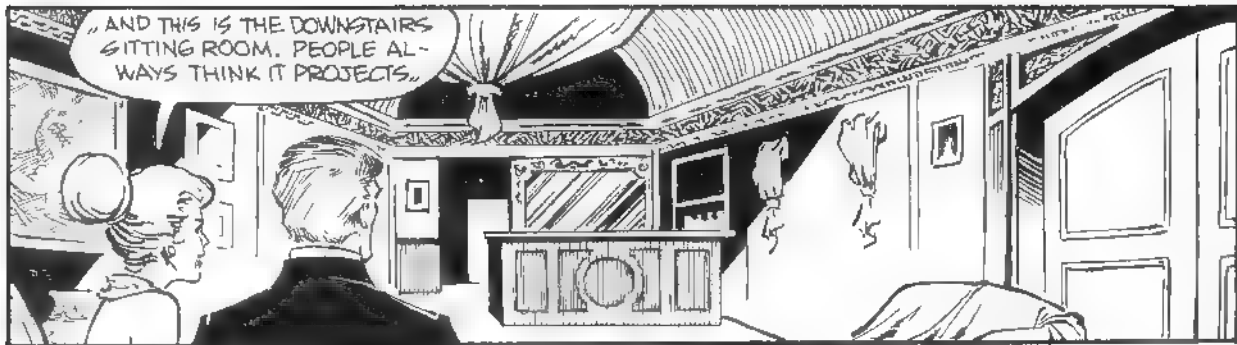
Mike
Vosburg '76



I CAN'T TELL YOU MUCH OF THE HISTORY OF THIS HOUSE., BUT I'M AFRAID EVERY VACANT PLACE EVENTUALLY INHERITS THAT REPUTATION.

WE
SHALL
SEE..

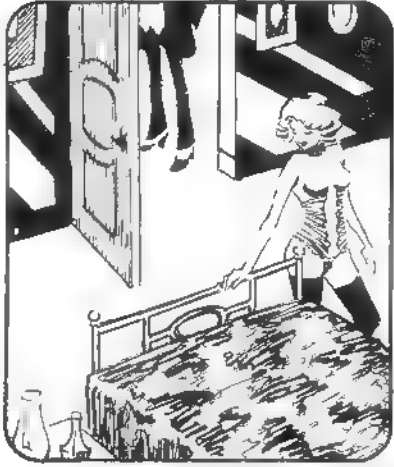




YOU KNOW GIGGLE:
THE ODDEST FEELING
ALWAYS COMES OVER
ME WHEN I GET
TO THIS
FLOOR



I ALWAYS FEEL
LIKE LETTING MY
HAIR DOWN

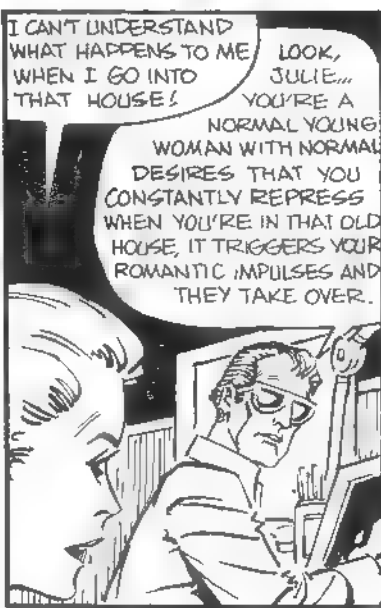
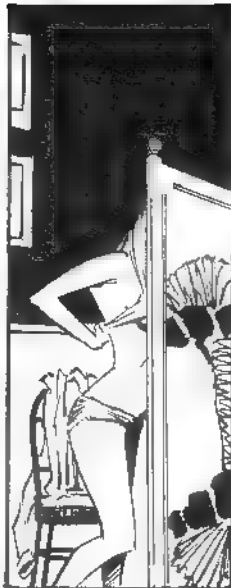


WELL COME ON IN,
AND SEE IF YOU
LIKE THE ROOM...



BUT BEFORE
WE GET START-
ED, THERE IS
A LITTLE
MATTER OF
BUSINESS
TO DISCUSS.







ARNOLD '76

A MODEST PROPOSAL



SCARECROW





*a book in progress
visuals:*

*Baoman + Nish
Sainrazbhoy-Maher*

SCARECROW

*a Sal Quartuccio Publication
scheduled for fall '77*

it's 2026
do you know where your children are?

A black and white photograph of a person lying face down on a sandy beach. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. In the background, there is a rocky shoreline with some vegetation and a small sign that reads "MAY 1964".

A black and white illustration of a person lying face down on the ground in a jungle setting. A speech bubble from an unseen character says "KITES!". The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The background shows dense foliage and trees.

WATER

KNOCKED GALLEY WEST BY A RESOUNDING BLOW FROM LAMONTHOS' CROOKED STAFF! APPEARING FROM NOWHERE AS HE'S NOT TO DO, THE BLACK MAGE SCATTERS HIS MINIONS AMID A FLURRY OF FLUTTERINGS AND PIPINGS

AWAY WITH YOU! FILTHY STUPID BEASTS! BACK OFF, I SAY! HE'S NOT YOURS YET!!



SO, MY FRIEND, YOU HAVE FAILED ME IN THE TASK I SET FOR YOU. ORION STILL RETAINS HIS MAGICKSWORD, I SUPPOSE YOU DID YOUR BEST, BUT CAPABLE KNIVES ARE SO HARD TO GET THESE DAYS. AH ME, YES, IT SEEMS I MUST DEAL WITH THIS OBSTREPEROUS RASCAL ORION, MYSELF. I SHALL PERHAPS NEED TO EMPLOY ALL MY TALENTS FOR DEVILNESS AND WICKEDNESS TO SEPARATE HIM FROM THE FABLED BLADE THORBOLT... KEY TO POWER UNPARALLED!



AH MY POOR UNWILLING PANN, IN FAILING YOU HAVE ACTUALLY DONE ME A SERVICE. YES! A REAL CHALLENGE AT LAST! A TEST OF MY MAGNIFICENT MALEVOLENCE! MY MALIFICENT METTLE! BADNESS KNOWS, I WAS GETTING A BIT RESTIVE. MY BLACK HEART OVERFLOWS WITH FORGIVENESS AND COMPASSION. I FREE YOU FROM THE ENSORCELLED WRISTLETS THAT BOUND YOUR WILL TO MINE AND LEAVE YOU TO REST--IN PEACE...
.. ETERNAL PEACE !!

... UP, UP AND AWAY, MY LOVELIES! AHA HA-HA-HA-HAAAA!



MOUNTING ONE OF HIS PITCHY-PINNED AVIANS, AND DIRECTING OTHERS TO SCOUT OUT ORION'S TRAIL, LAMONTHOS SOARS ALOFT, LEAVING THE REMAINDER TO RESUME THEIR GRISLY REFEAST AS THE UNGAINLY CREATURES CLOSE THEIR CIRCLE AROUND THE DARK WARRIOR AND ONE PREPARES TO GIVE THE DEATH STROKE... HE STIRS!!

SACRILEGIOUS AND... A ROBBERY D. DOLPHIN... THE TINY FIGURE OF ORION MAKING HIS WAY ACROSS THE BURNING SANDS

AH! WE'LL DOE MY PRETTIES!
THERE HE IS!



W, W, MY APPLINGS HE NOT T P SK GETTING CLOSE
TO THAT HOOD B-E S N P D C H S. I M I SHOULD BE
WHEN HE CAN WOVE THE VERY ELEMENTS THEMSELVES
TO A DUS?



WUSTED TO ALL-H'S SECRET HANCI' TALENTS THE
VAG MADE CALLED A S N T V A T I O N E
S H R E K A S W I A L V G A Y O A I D S A I D T O S C U R
O R C A T O U S T



A LITTLE SANDSTORM SHOULD SMOOTH DOWN THE
ABRASIVE CHARACTER OF ORION. NICELY, EH?
O' WIND... WIND... WIND...





THEY'RE THE BEST! AS THE LAST OF THE
 THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE
 THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE

GUYS! BOOBS! FRODO BAGGINS!
 WHERE IS HE? HE'S ALWAYS IN THE



HE'S THE BEST! AS THE LAST OF THE
 THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE
 THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE

HE'S THE BEST! AS THE LAST OF THE
 THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE
 THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE LAST OF THE

SOMETIME LATER, A SURPRISED LIZARD, ONE OF THE DENIZENS OF THE DESERT HARDY ENOUGH TO SURVIVE LIFE IN IT'S UNCOMPROMISING HARSHNESS, IS THE ONLY WITNESS TO THE APPARENTLY ACCELERATED UNFOLDING OF A NEW LEAF ON A NEARBY PLANT.



NOW ORION MUST CONTEND WITH AN EVEN DEADLIER ENEMY, THE MERCILESS, IMPLACABLE LAND OF BALIMODRA, ITSELF. IT'S WEAPONS ARE MORE INSIDIOUS THAN MERE CONJURINGS... BLISTERING HEAT...

ORION STEPS FORTH, LITTLE THE HORSE FOR NEAR.



SO, THAT'S WHAT A SILKWORM FEELS LIKE. NEXT TIME WE MEET, MAGCIAN, IT'LL BE ON MY TERMS!

.. FLAME SPEWING GEYSERS..



RATIONS ARE GETTING LOW. WE'VE ONE THING LESS TO CARRY WHEN THEY'RE GONE. BOOTS WEIGH A TON. I'LL CUT THEM INTO SANDALS.

CARN VOROUS FLORA...



LET LOOSE, YOU DAMNED CABBAGE, OR I'LL MAKE COLESLAW OUT OF YOU!



DAMN! BAL MODRA MUST BE ANOTHER NAME FOR HELL!

THE NERVE-RACKING VALLEY OF
ZIGHS...

...MIRAGES, MIRAGES THAT ARE
MORE THAN THEY SEEM...

THIRST MADDENED, DRIVEN ON BY
WILL ALONE, ORION TRAVELS UNTIL
HE DROPS, THEN, TO HIS HEAT-SODDEN
BRAIN COME STRANGE, HALTING
VISIONS THAT SEEM TO BECKON, TO
ENTICE...

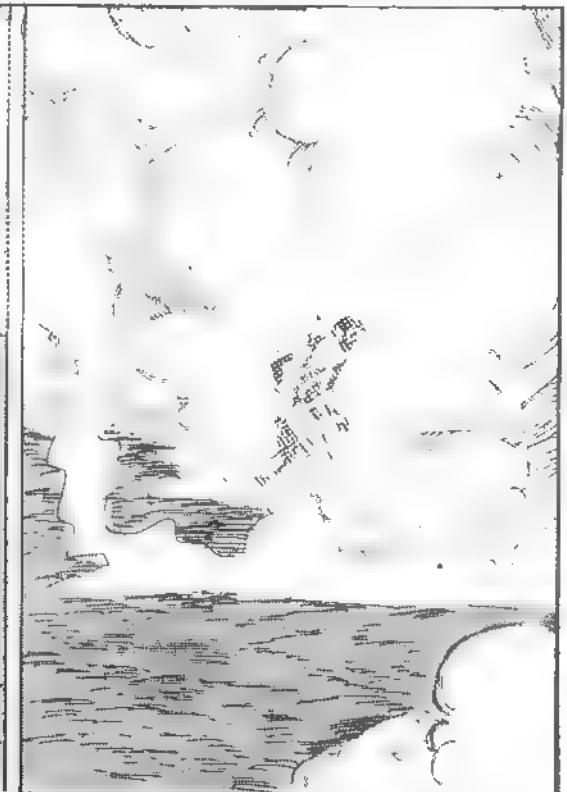
IT'S JUST THE WIND
BLOWING THROUGH
HOLES IN THE ROCKS...
BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE
WOMEN WAILING...

FACES -
LIGHTS - COLORS - CITIES
IN THE SKY. I'M C-
CRACKING...

WATERS
ALL GONE
IN 50 M
I--JUST
ABOUT



EAGER NOW, ANTICIPATING, HE RISES AND STAGGERS ON TO AN INLAND SEA... THE LEGENDARY LOST SEA OF
BALIMODRA, A VAST EXPANSE OF NOT WATER-BUT UNDULATING, WHISPERING, BILLOWING VAPOR



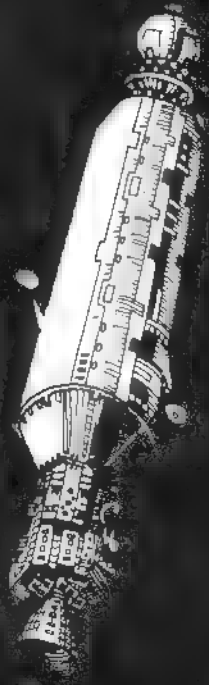
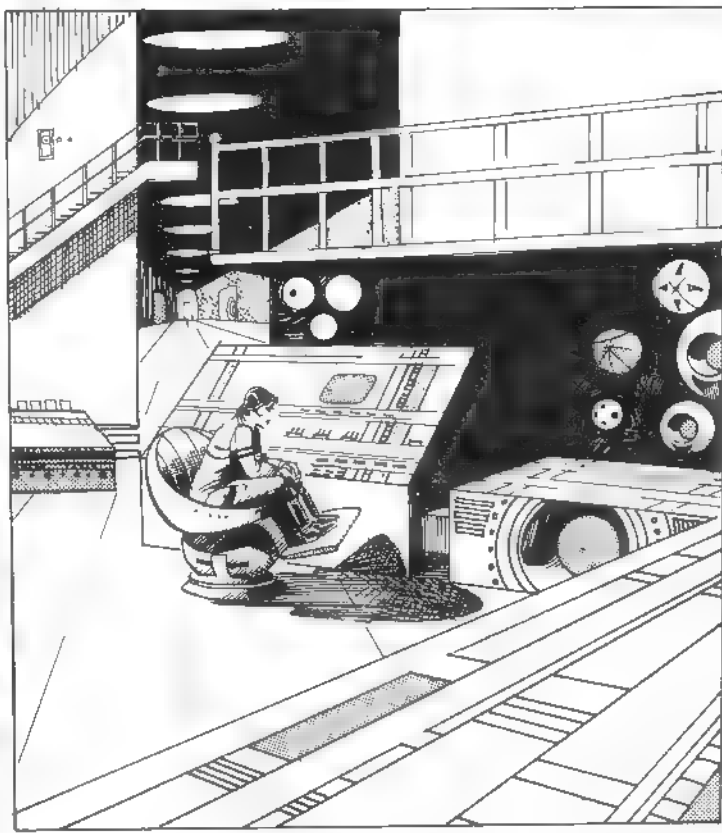
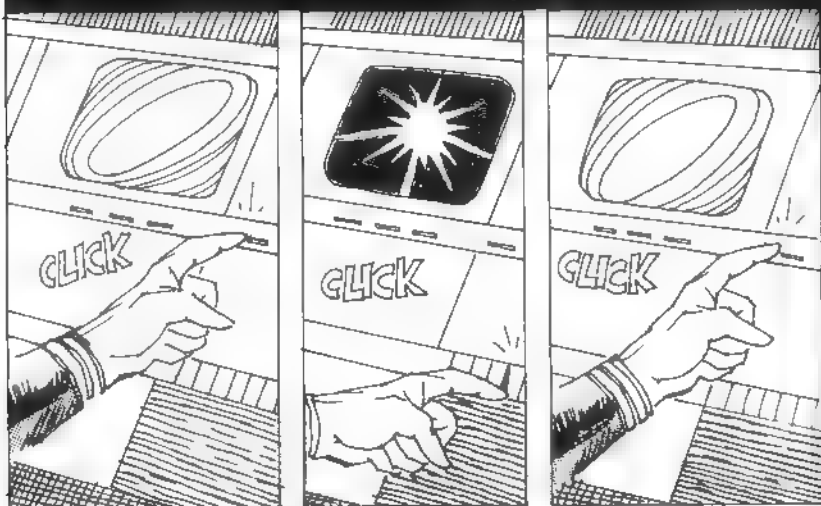
HE STUMBLES TOWARD THE PHANTASMS THAT MESMERIZE HIM AND INTO THE ROILING, MILKY GREY
OPACITY OF THE LOST SEA--AND DISAPPEARS FROM SIGHT!!

MERCY

SCRIPT
BOB KEENAN

ART
ERNIE COLÓN

IN THE DEEPEST REACHES OF THE GALAXY, THERE EXISTS A STRANGE BALANCE OF BLACK AND WHITE...OF VACUUM AND SUBSTANCE, OF ILLUSION AND REALITY. ALSO INCLUDED IN SPACE IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF MAN AND MACHINE...IN ORDER TO EXPLORE AND DISCOVER THE UNKNOWN. BUT, IN SOME CASES, THE RELATIONSHIP DOESN'T END THERE...



MY, YOU'VE BEEN MOODY
LATELY-- WHY DON'T WE
TALK ABOUT IT?

WILLIAM, AS
A COMPUTER,
YOUR CAPABILITY
FOR UNDERSTANDING
IS INDEED LIMITED,
IF NOT NON-EXISTENT!

AW--TRY
ME!

WELL, IT'S THIS DAMNED WAITING. I DON'T KNOW
WHETHER ANYONE'S COMING TO RESCUE ME OR NOT.
I'M GOING **CRAZY** OUT HERE. CRUZ AND MADDEN
ARE DEAD, MY NAVIGATION IS SHOT TO HELL, I'VE
GOT A COMPUTER THAT PLAYS MOTHER TO ME...
MY MORALE **IS** A LITTLE ON THE DOWN SIDE!

I RESENT
THAT CRACK
ABOUT MY
PLAYING
MOTHER!

GODDAMIT, YOU
CAN'T RESENT!
YOU'RE A
COMPUTER!

WELL--
WHOSE
IDEA
WAS IT
TO
CHANGE
MY
CIRCUITRY?

-IF YOU WANT TO GO
THROUGH SPACE WITH
A \$4.95 CALCULATOR,
CHANGE ME BACK--
BE MY GUEST!

I'M SORRY--
IT'S NOT YOUR
FAULT-- I'M A
LITTLE EDGY!

HEY--I
HAVE
AN IDEA!

AW, COME ON--
THAT ALWAYS
CRACKED YOU UP.
HOW ABOUT SOME
MONKEYS PLAYING
SAXOPHONES?

WILL YOU CUT
IT OUT? THOSE
DAMNED
HOLOGRAMS
AREN'T FUNNY
ANYMORE!

GROUCH

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

ASPARAGUS
OR BROCCOLI--

IS THAT ALL THAT'S LEFT?

AT LEAST YOU'VE
GOT A CHOICE!

SOME
CHOICE!

WELL, YOU KNOW
SOME PEOPLE
IN INDIA...

YOU SEE?
YOU **SEE**
YOU'RE JUST
LIKE MY
MOTHER!

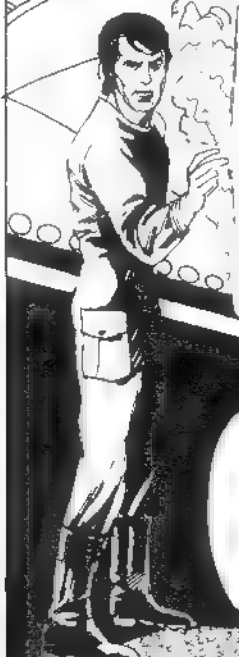


SAM...



WHO-WHO ARE YOU?
HOW DID YOU
GET HERE?

I'M FOR
YOU, SAM-
I WANT
TO KEEP
YOU
COMPANY.



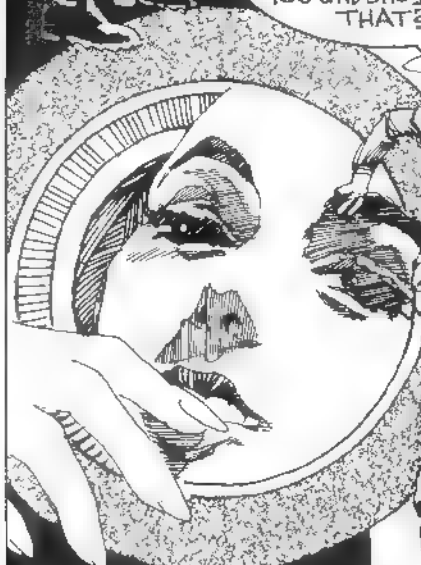
SON OF A BITCH,
WILLIE, STOP IT,
STOP IT, STOP IT!
LEAVE ME ALONE-
FOR GOD'S SAKE,
LEAVE ME...
ALONE!

IT WOULD'VE
BEEN FINE
IF YOU
HADN'T
TRIED TO
TOUCH HER.

DON'T YOU SEE-
I **HAD** TO TOUCH
HER! I'VE GOT TO
TOUCH HER. I'VE
GOT TO TOUCH
SOMEBODY!
I'VE GOT TO BE
WITH PEOPLE! CAN'T
YOU UNDERSTAND
THAT?

USS WYLER, USS WYLER-
THIS IS STAR CRUISER
OMEGA JACK-DO YOU
COPY?

OMEGA JA



Y-YEAH! THIS IS THE
USS WYLER-THIS IS
CAPTAIN SAM MAHLMAN-
COME IN!

SAM, THIS IS
MICKEY TORRES-
THANK GOD YOU'RE
ALIVE! IT WAS
TOTAL CHANCE
THAT WE FOUND
YOU! THE WYLER
WAS REPORTED
DESTROYED FOUR
YEARS AGO!

YEAH, WELL--IT WAS CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR. MY NAVIGATIONAL UNITS WERE SMASHED--CRUZ AND MADDEN TRIED TO FIX IT, BUT BOTH LIFE CORDS WERE SEVERED BY THE JAGGED METAL. I DIDN'T KNOW TIL IT WAS TOO LATE... I COULDN'T SAVE THEM.

WELL--THAT'S ALL OVER NOW, BUDDY. YOU'RE COMING HOME. WE'RE BRINGING YOUR SHIP ABOARD NOW. WHEN THE PRESSURE IS BACK IN THE HANGAR, COME ON IN.



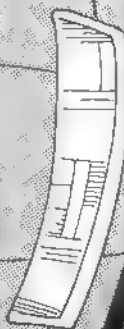
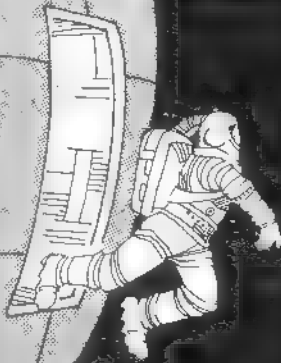
WELL, WILLIE--I GUESS THIS IS IT. I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP... YOU'VE BEEN A GOOD FRIEND. I'M--GONNA MISS YOU.

ALLRIGHT, SAM-- WELCOME ABOARD!

I GOT TO GO NOW, WILLIE... GOODBYE.

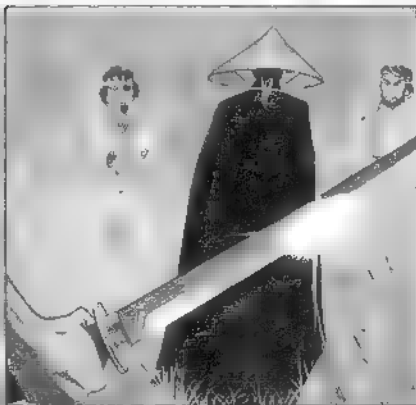


YOU'RE HOME NOW, SAM...YOUR LONELINESS IS OVER...BUT MINE HAS JUST BEGUN...



THE END

PROLOGUE -



YES MATSUO YES THEY WERE FOOLS FOR THEIR INTENDED VICTIM WAS MATSUO TOSHIRO
 ACKNOWLEDGED BY ALL AS THE GREATEST "KENSHI" OR SWORDMASTER OF HIS AGE! WELL NOT
 QUITE BY ALL MATSUO NO NOT BY ALL FOR THERE IS ONE YOU MUST FACE THIS NIGHT
 WHO WILL TEST THE TRUTH OF THAT! SO YOU WALK ON TO YOUR DESTINY THOUGH IT MEANS
 YOUR DOOM AND YOU SMILE GRIMLY WITH THE FIERCE PRIDE OF THE SAMAURI YOU ARE YOU
 SMILE...FOR IF YOU MUST FACE HIM, HE MUST FACE YOU....YOU FACE A DEVIL BUT HE FACES A

KENSHI BLADE!

HIS MIND SLIPPED BACK TO THAT
 NIGHT IN THE INN OF KAMURA



MATSUO YOU MAY TELL ME
 YOU THIRST ALL YOU PLEASE
 BUT DON'T EXPECT ME TO
 BELIEVE YOU!

HA-HA HA! CAN I
 KEEP NOTHING FROM
 YOU TAKASHI?

YES, TAKASHI ALWAYS DID
 KNOW WHAT OTHERS
 COULD ONLY GUESS...



OH TAKASHI!
 THERE SHE IS!
 IF ONLY I DARED
 TO CALL HER!

O HERO OF A HUNDRED
 COMBATS FEAR NOT! I WILL
 CALL HER FOR YOU...

NO!! TAKASHI NO
 SHE DOES NOT KNOW
 OF MY FEELINGS FOR
 HER! PLEASE.



MATSUO I AM SORRY MY
 FRIEND, I SHOULD NOT
 JEST ABOUT HER...

IS ALL RIGHT
 TAKASHI... I SHOULD
 NOT BE SO EASILY
 INJURED. HERE DRINK!



SO THEY DRANK WARM SAKÉ 'TIL
 THE MOON WAS HIGH AND THEIR
 HEADS SWAM AND REASON FLEW.

HO, BOISTROUS ONE!
 WILL YOU AND YOUR
 FRIEND JOIN US IN A GAME
 OF CHANCE?

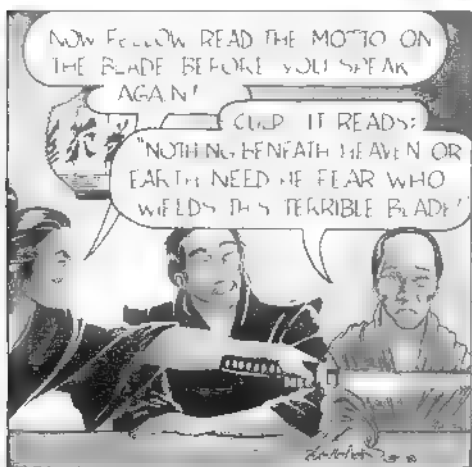


HO! INNKEEPER!
 MORE WINE!!!

YES TAKASHI,
 MORE WINE...



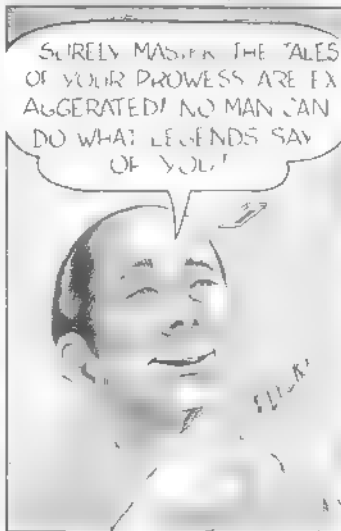
OLD ONE WE ARE SAMAURI!
 WE PLAY GAMES OF CHANCE WITH
 OUR LIVES! WELCOME TO YOU!



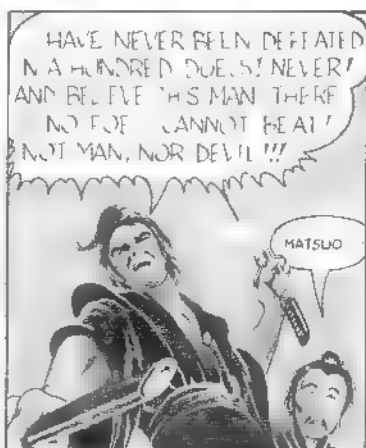
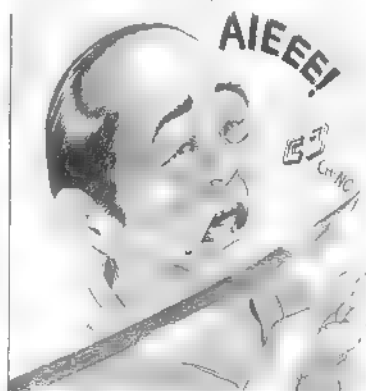
USHIRO'S BLASPHEMOUS CRY HAD SCARCELY DIED WHEN A CRASH OF THE UNDER HE RALDED A NEW ARRIVAL.



NOW AS IT HAPPENED ONE OF THOSE PRESENT WAS SKEPTICAL OF TOSHIRO...



LET IT BE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH ALL EXPECTED THE FOOL TO BE PARTED FROM HIS LIFE IN THAT INSTANT HE WOULD HAVE BEEN BE NEATH TOSHIRO'S NOTICE HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE SAME AS IT WAS.



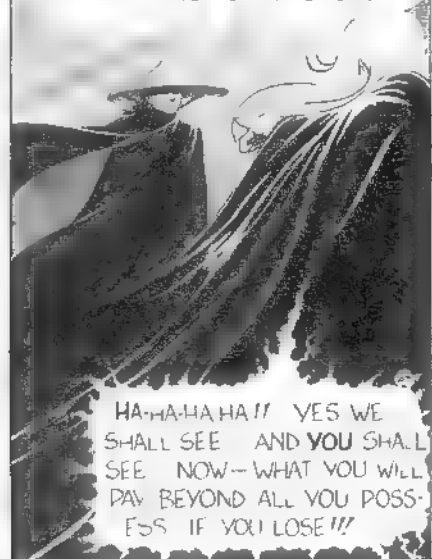
YES DEMON! YESSSS... KNOW!
MY LIFE MY SOUL OR YOURS
DEMON!!! OR YOURS



BUT THE TIME FOR REFLECTION
WAS FAST FOR MOUNT KIVOSAKI
LOOMED IN THE MOONLIT SKY

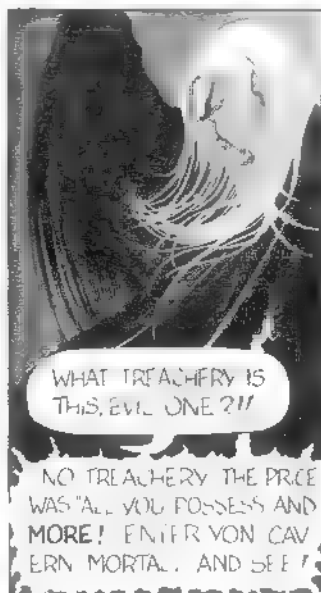
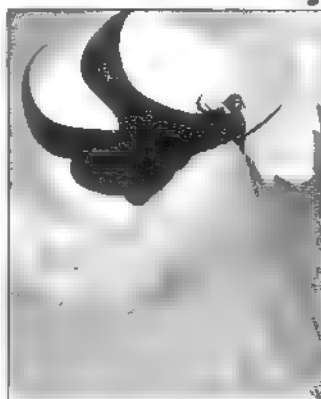


WE HAVE YET TO SEE WHO SHALL
PAY THE PRICE "DARK ONE!!!"



HA-HA-HA-HA!! YES WE
SHALL SEE AND YOU SHALL
SEE NOW—WHAT YOU WILL
PAY BEYOND ALL YOU POSSESS
IF YOU LOSE!!!

HA-HA-HA!! YES MORTAL "OR
MINE" FAREWELL "KENSHI"
HA-HA-HA HA HA HA HA



WHAT TREACHERY IS
THIS, EVIL ONE?!!

NO TREACHERY THE PRICE
WAS "ALL YOU POSSESS AND
MORE!" ENTER VON CAV
ERN MORTAL... AND SEE!

AND THEN I WAS GONE, AND
MAISUO TOSHIRO HAD TO
REALLY WHAT HE HAD DONE

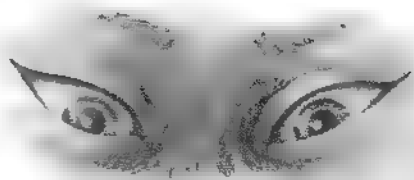


WELCOME TOSHIRO! I
HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!
ARE YOU READY THEN TO
PAY THE PRICE?



SO TOSHIRO ENTERED THE DIMLY
LIT CAVE AND A MOMENT
OUT AT WHAT HE SAW, ONLY
THEN DID MAISUO SEE AT LAST
THE FULL EXTENT OF HIS folly





IT STRUCK HIM LIKE A PHYSICAL BLOW AND THE IMPACT SENT HIS MIND REELING. IMAGES RACED MADLY PAST HIS EYES... HE AGAIN SAW HIS MASTER, AGAIN HEARD HIS VOICE:
'THE SWORD IS THE SOUL, MY SON. USE IT SO....'

HE HAD TRIED TO,,
INDEED IT WAS THUS THAT HE FIRST SAW **HER**. HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO EDO, SOME FIVE WINTERS AGO, WHEN HE SAW THE BRIGANDS ABOUT TO FORCE THEMSELVES ON A YOUNG GIRL....

HIS RAGE WAS LIKE A LIVING THING! HIS BLADE ROSE AND FELL LIKE A CLEAVER! HE STAINED THE PRISTINE SNOW WITH THEIR TAINTED BLOOD, THEN HE CARRIED HER OFF.. OFF TO A NEW LIFE SHE NEVER SAW HER SAVIOUR....

... IN SECRET UNTIL NOW!

...THE ORDEAL HAD LEFT HER SENSELESS/ A BAND OF MERCHANTS TOOK THE GIRL TO THE INN OF KAMURA WHERE THEY TOOK HER IN AND GAVE HER WORK, AND FROM TIME TO TIME, HE SAW HER... AND GREW TO LOVE HER IN SECRET...



MAY THE GODS FORGIVE ME! SHE
WAS SO YOUNG, SO RADIANT. I
DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HER NAME.
AND NOW SHE'S LOST TO ME
FOREVER. I AM SORRY.

HA HA HA! HOW TOUCHING!
SHE STILL LIVES UNTIL YOU
LOSE! THEN, SHE
IS MINE!

SOON, DEVIL. SOON! YOU ARE NOT
CONTENT TO GAMBLE WITH MY SOUL.
NO YOU THINK TO INSURE MY DAM-
NATION BY MAKING ME RESPONSIBLE
FOR THIS INNOCENT'S BLOOD AND SOUL.

BUT, I SHALL **NOT** WORK!
NOR SHALL YOU HAVE HER
SOUL, FIEND! HER BLOOD
I ACCEPT! BUT HER SOUL
IS FREE! FORGIVE ME!!!

PREPARE YOURSELF,
MORTAL! WHEN YOU
COME OUT COME WITH
BLADE IN HAND — AND
DIE !!! HA HA HA!

...YES, I WILL
COME...

NO! YES!! SHE IS
BEYOND YOUR
REACH NOW!

AND NOW, DEMON,
BEWARE! AM
MATEUO TOSHRO
AND, BRING
YOU DEATH!

COME DEVIL! I AM
HERE! I HAVE CHEATED
YOU OF ONE SOUL
TAKE MINE IF YOU
DARE !!!

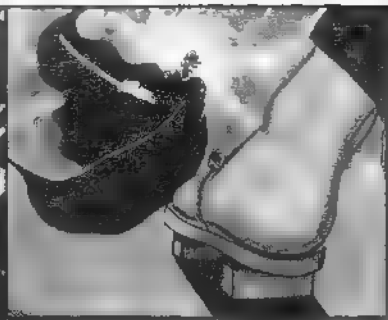


COME! I,
MATSUO TOSH-
IKO AWAIT!



NOT FAST ENOUGH,
DEMON! YOU FOR
GET WHO YOU NOW
FACE! AND NOW.

...NOW YOU DIE, MORTAL !!!
YOU FORGET WHAT YOU
FACE!



SUDDENLY, IT WAS OVER!
MATSUO TOSHIRO HAD
PROVED HIS BOAST!

BUT AS HE STUMBLED
AWAY FROM HIS DEARLY
WON VICTORY...

HA HA HA! DO YOU
CONCEDE DEFEAT?
SURELY YOU SEE
THE FUTILITY...

BUT I CUT YOU!
I WON! I WON!!

CUT ME? HA HA
HA! MORTAL...
DO I BLEED?

WHATEVER IT
TAKES, DEMON,
YOU SHALL DIE!

AND KENSHI MATSUO
TOSHIRO ATTACKED
WITH ALL HIS INCOMP
ARABLE SKILL AGAIN
AND AGAIN. AND
SOME SAY THAT ON
A MOONLIT NIGHT
YOU CAN SEE THEM
STILL ..





HEROES

These six 8½ x 11 full color plates of Hawkman, Black Terror, The Joker, Lone Ranger and Tonto, The Vigilante and Modesty Blaise seem to leap out at you, vibrant color paintings by Gray Morrow. Suitable for framing. Set of 6, mailed flat with cardboard protection. **\$3.00** plus 50¢ postage.



ANTICIPATION

Large 14" x 11" full color print by Rich Corben. Mailed flat with cardboard protection. **\$1.50** plus 50¢ postage.



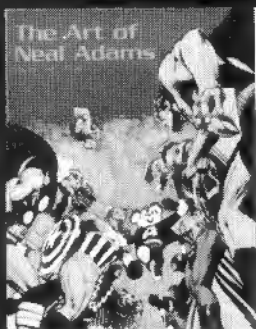
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- 11 - The Vanguard
- 21 - House on Whore Hill
- 25 - A Modest Proposal
- 26 - Scarecrow
- 32 - Orion, Chapter 3
- 38 - Mercy
- 42 - Kenshi Blade
- 50 - Sal Quartuccio (ads)

Artists:

- Sal Quartuccio (editor)
- Ken Barr - 1, 51(ad)
- Ernie Colon - 2, 38-41(a)
- Jan S. Strnad - 3-10(s)
- Bob Kline - 3-10(a), 52
- Alex Toth - 11-20
- Mike Vosberg - 21-24
- Herb Arnold - 25
- Bill Maher - 26-31+, 50(ad)
- Nishi Maher - 26-31+
- Gray Morrow - 32-37, 50-51(ads)
- Bob Keenan - 38-41(s)
- Dr. William Thomas Stillwell - 42-49
- Richard V. Corben - 50(ad)

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n/a